was caused to 1.80 lakh houses.

(d) About Rs. 2100 crore.

(e) to (h) In response to the Memorandum submitted by the State Government seeking assistance of Rs. 610.65 crore from the National Fund for Calamity Relief (NFCR), an assistance of Rs. 55.35 crore as approved by NCRC was released to the State. No further assistance is to be released to the State from the NFCR for that cyclone.

Disaster Preparedness

1520. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a newsitem published in the Hindustan Times dated 22nd February, 2000 captioned "Need for disaster preparedness stressed" as coping with rising disasters varying from epidemics to road accidents, perennial droughts and floods etc. would be the "greatest humanitarian challenge" for the country in the new millennium according to the Oxfam's Indian Disasters Report;

(b) if so, what are the main/salient features of the above mentioned Report; and

(c) what action Government propose to take in this regard during 2000-2001?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The above news-item relates to the Oxfam's "India Disasters Report", which refers to the preparation of a comprehensive disaster response and mitigation policy, developing an appropriate legal and administrative framework to implement it with the involvement of Government, voluntary sector, industry and people etc.

(c) Institutionalised arrangements within a broad policy framework already exist in the country for Natural Disaster Management which are reviewed and updated from time to time.

Negative growth of Agricultural Product

1521. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the crops such as wheat, pulses, oilseeds and cotton are anticipated to show negative growth rate this year as compared to last year;

(b) measures proposed to be taken in this regard; and

(c) whether Government proposed to offset the shortfall in the production of these crops?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) As per the assessment made in January, 2000, the prospects of production of wheat, oilseeds, pulses and cotton were expected to be lower than last year. However, prospects for certain crops have since improved, due to favourable weather during the past two months.

(b) and (c) Assessment of the concurrent crops prospects is a regular exercise. Whereever necessary discussions are also held with the State Governments to assess specific requirements for taking contingency measures on input supply & crop protection. The Government is also implementing various crop specific schemes/ programmes to increase their production and productivity such as:

— Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Wheat Based Cropping System (ICDP-Wheat).

— National Pulses Development Project.

— Oilseeds Production Programme (OPP).

— Intensive Cotton Development Programme (ICDP).

Prices of Coconut Oil and Copra

1522. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the steep fall in the prices of coconut oil and copra between November, 1999 and February, 2000 affecting the coconut growers in the Kerala State very badly;

(b) whether it is a fact that the minimum support price for copra for the year 2000 has not yet been announced though the procurement season starts during the first week of December every year; and

(c) if so, what steps are being taken to announce a remunerative